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AMA-MX

Let's go...!

The 58th time a gate dropped for a 450SX Main Event at Anaheim signified the start of an electrifying 2013 AMA Supercross Championship. The first of three rounds at the Los Angeles venue surprisingly belonged to Davi Millsaps and Suzuki but there are potential winners right through the field in this seventeen-race extravaganza

Photo by Simon Cudby



PLAY





MOTOGP

46 not out...

We ran a shot of Valentino Rossi indulging in one of his motorcycling hobbies in the last issue but the fact that OTOR has arrived at edition '46' and the Yamaha hype about The Doctor returning home has already begun... well...it seemed apt to use this fantastic Supermoto image from Stefano Taglioni. Can Rossi head triumphantly into the twilight this year?

Photo by Stefano Taglioni







TEST

Cruising on a Guzzi...

A nice laid-back intro to our motorcycle test coverage thanks to Roland Brown, who seems to have immensely enjoyed his outing on the new Moto Guzzi California in France at the tail end of 2012. A bit of speed and grace; check out RB's verdict on the Italian mover

Photo by Milagro





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AMA-SX

LOS ANGELES

ANAHEIM 1 · JANUARY 5th · Rnd 1 of 17

450SX winner: Davi Millsaps, Suzuki

250SX winner: Eli Tomac, Honda



MILLSAPS STEPS UP IN SURPRISE OPENER

By Steve Matthes, Photos by Simon Cudby



And that's a wrap on round one of the American Supercross series which some compare to a traveling circus for more reasons than I care to think of. Anaheim, California was the scene and by the time the tents got taken down, the semi-trucks headed out around midnight, there were more than a few people wondering what it was that we all saw.

First off, the 250SX class played out like we thought it would with GEICO Honda's Eli Tomac collecting the lead ahead of an ugly first turn crash with TLD Honda's Jesse Nelson and pulling away for what was (for him) a pretty easy win.

Tomac was the fastest guy all day in practice, looked awesome and why shouldn't he? Powerful at Bercy, strong from winter training with the CRF450R and he was the defending champion in the class. The form book had been diligently followed.

KTM's Kenny Roczen kept him honest in practice, often trading the top spot with Eli, but in the Main he had nothing for Tomac. And surprisingly, the German got caught by TLD's Cole Seely near the end of the race. Right now in this class, it's Tomac, a bit of a gap, then the trio of Seely, Roczen and probably Blake Baggett who hurt his wrist in that pile up with Nelson off the start. Baggett was just 'OK' all day and if he's not seriously hurt, he'll get better.

And Baggett's new teammate Martin Davalos? Well, new bike, new team but same old Davalos, he's very fast but has to find a way to make it happen one way or another. His heat race win was washed away with the front end of his Kawasaki KX250F in the first turn of the Main.

Now the 450SX class...which was where things got nutty. The big four of Ryan Villopoto, Ryan Dungey, James Stewart and Chad Reed were anything but big. Villopoto showed blazing speed in practice and his heat race but crashed three times in the main event.



PLAY



Tomac shows a clean pair of heels to Tyla Rattray. On the evidence of Anaheim the Honda rider is going to be hard to catch and could be yet another thrilling addition to the 450SX class in 2014 if he makes the move up on his favoured capacity of motorcycle. His win last weekend meant he is now 2 for 2 at the Angel Stadium



Trey Canard swapped the question mark that followed his name coming into Anaheim for an exclamation, after what can only be described as a remarkable return to action almost one year after the LA horror crash



Stewart dabbed a knee in his last practice and rode in pain the whole night. He could be out for a while after his MRI early this week. Reed looked average but somehow stretched out a fourth place finish and Dungey, well, he didn't look like he had anything for the top three guys and crashed before we could really verify that fact. His third spot, like Reed's fourth, was a fortunate one to be sure.

Out front it was Davi Millsaps who was fast all day in practice and won his heat. Even still, no one was really thinking he was going to be a podium guy on this night. Trey Canard stalked Davi, waiting for him to tire before making a move. Most figured that was it, Canard had found his way by and would probably win. And what a story that would've been, coming all the way back from his gruesome injury suffered last year at Dodgers Stadium. But to cap off the wild and wacky night, Millsaps got Canard back on the very last lap and took a very surprising win.

You would have gotten pretty good odds here in my hometown of Las Vegas had you picked the oft injured, much maligned Millsaps for victory. But good on him, he earned this one through-and-through with some great riding. Only Stewart, who sources say has a serious knee injury, looks to be in trouble.

Villopoto's 16th wasn't great but considering all he went through, it's five points that he'll need at some phase in the title chase. Amazing that he kept getting up. If you're Reed you're pumped that you somehow got fourth and Dungey can look at his main championship rivals and know that he finished the best out of them. I think it's a bit premature to call Millsaps and Canard true contenders for the crown at this moment, too many question marks in my mind. Let's give both guys a couple of rounds shall we?

One thing for sure, Anaheim could not have gone any weirder than it did. It's a fantastic way to start the season and sets the stage for an awesome 2013. Let's get this going!



PLAY

All the Bling...Millsaps' RM-Z450 was one of the more eye-catching of the machinery on show for the first time...





Not the kind of close contact Ryan Villopoto was hoping for at Anaheim. A nervy start for the champion who has now crashed significantly in his last two major SX appearances since getting injured last April



Like Villopoto, Blake Baggett was another looking to re-establish some SX credentials after breaking his wrist at the Monster Energy Cup. It was a quiet start for the AMA National champ...

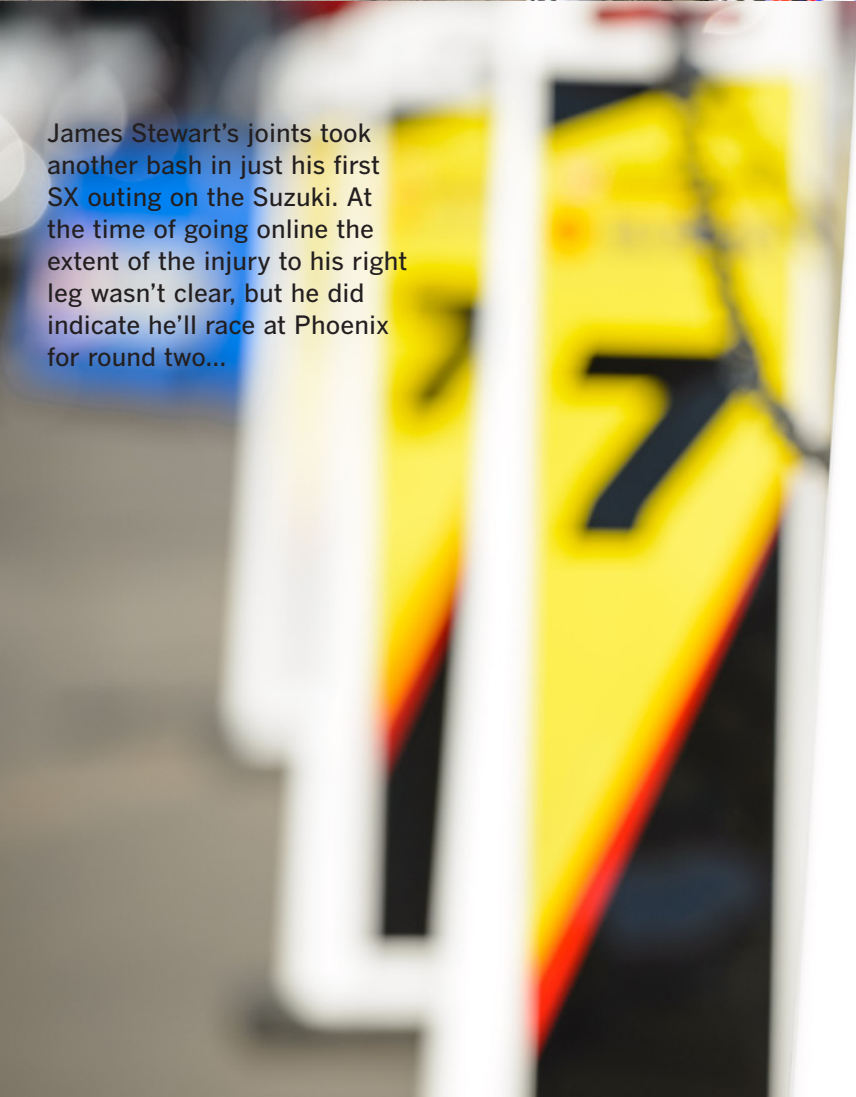


With the new factory KTM apparently using a rear WP air shock Dungey guided the '13 bike to a typically solid first outing...in spite of several mistakes





Those Hondas get everywhere. If it isn't the Geico bikes then the TLD crew were setting the pace thanks to this pair



James Stewart's joints took another bash in just his first SX outing on the Suzuki. At the time of going online the extent of the injury to his right leg wasn't clear, but he did indicate he'll race at Phoenix for round two...





Canard takes flight in practice
while Roczen (below) keeps
his eyes on the prize



AMERICAN
SUPERCROSS







Millsaps' speed through the whoops was a key ingredient to his success and that thrilling last lap move



After five years in blue it seems a little strange to see Zach Osborne in Honda red. Anaheim wasn't spectacular on the results sheet but expect more from the former Grand Prix rider



The Man was keeping cool after a podium double brace for his two riders in Los Angeles. Marvin Musquin is committed to the East Coast for 2013...



Chad Reed at play, proving that the Aussie veteran still has something for the young 'uns in the style stakes at least. Across the page Justin Barcia's factory Honda...gotta love those twin exhausts





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Photos: Tagliari S., Archer R.

**CAIROLI UND
HERLINGS
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DÉJÀ-VU

Tony Cairoli krönt sich 2012 vorzeitig und zum dritten Mal in Folge mit der KTM 350 SX-F zum MX1 Weltmeister. Nach Marvin Musquin 2010 und Ken Roczen 2011, sorgt Jeffrey Herlings mit der KTM 250 SX-F dafür, dass das Red Bull KTM Werksteam seit nunmehr drei Jahren in beiden Klassen ungeschlagen ist – WELTKLASSE!

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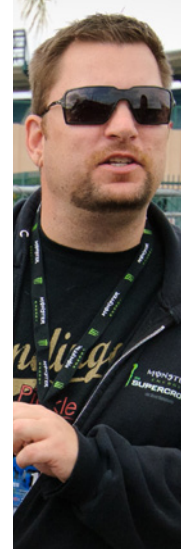
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THE REAL ZACH ATTACK...

By Steve Matthes

Last year I'm sure there were more than a few fans watching the unseeded 250SX practices and wondering who this #338 guy was. It couldn't possibly be the former 250SX champion Jason Lawrence could it? That 338 hadn't been seen on the racetracks of America for a couple of years but this guy was looking pretty good out there. It wasn't Lawrence, it was an American who wore the number before Jason did and in a weird twist of fate, just needed some time in Europe to get better at supercross.

Zach Osborne was no doubt the surprise of the 250SX west coast series last year as he took his Cosworth-powered Monster Energy Yamaha to a couple of podiums and some strong rides. Osborne and his team committed to four races and stuck to that, despite Zach being third in the points after those four rounds. Osborne hadn't raced supercross in (incredibly) three years and truthfully, wasn't that good when he did race it. Without a saddle in his home country, Osborne headed to Europe in 2008 to rebuild and hopefully reload.

His performances in the stadiums last year opened some team manager's eyes in the USA; this kid seems to be much better now than he was the last time we saw him. A sub-par MX2 GP season (due to injury) didn't dampen the teams' heightened interest over here. Mitch Payton at Pro Circuit wanted him as did the GEICO Honda guys. In the end, Pro Circuit couldn't get Osborne a contract fast enough for his liking so he went with GEICO - it's a coin flip really and one that many racers here would love to have.

Osborne, who grabbed a GP win in '09, a couple of podiums, a British Championship title and a whole flock of fans over the pond, was back in America and looking to show everyone that those four races last January weren't the product of a chancer, a good bike and luck. Nope, he was now embracing this third act of a strange career from amateur superstar to washed out pro to racing in Europe on the path to profile redemption.

Osborne's 7th might not blow your wig back but he was fast, very fast...

On paper, his seventh at Anaheim might not blow your wig back but he was very, very fast. Making a mistake and going down in the first turn, Osborne came around the first lap in fifteenth out of twenty. His work cut out for him, Zach sliced through the pack on a track that wasn't easy to pass to eventually nip Tyla Rattray for seventh at the flag. In the last four laps he passed four riders and was the fastest man on the dirt.

Osborne is fit and fast and can now look to get a win this season. He's turned a career heading nowhere around thanks to his risky and ballsy move of heading to Europe.

Last year Osborne was forced to put out a pit-board in front of his pits that said: "I'm not Jason Lawrence" because of the crush of fans coming by. I think after this year, there won't be any pit board needed. He's the real deal.

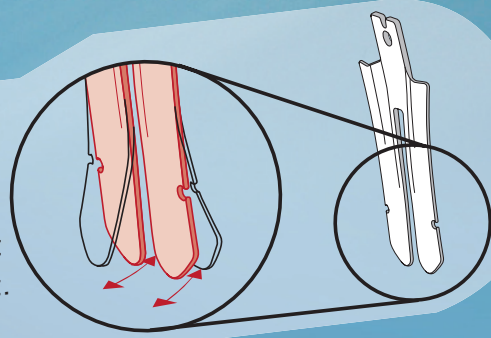
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ITALIAN OBSESSION

DOVIZIOSO AND THE DIRT

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Claudio Cabrini, Max Zanzani, Milagro/Tech3moto

There are not many riders in the MotoGP paddock that are as motocross-obsessed as former world champion Andrea Dovizioso. The Italian has bounced from factory Honda saddles to Ducati via a stint with Yamaha in 2012 but in spite of the speed and skill that have delivered sixty three GP podium results and made the 26 year old one of the most consistent racers in the premier class it seems that Dovi's real heart lies in the dirt.

OTOR grabbed ten minutes with Ducati Corse's new representative during the 2012 campaign to chat about the passion that sees him regularly making FIM Motocross World Championship Grand Prix visits each year when the MotoGP calendar permits. Dovizioso's eyes light up when discussing tracks, technique and especially people like MX1 world champ Tony Cairoli and other names like Herlings, Villopoto and Stewart. Here then is a rare audience with a MotoGP star on an activity that doesn't involve slicks and technical set-up...

Been riding much recently?

Not as much as I would like! I would love to use motocross more to train but there are a couple of reasons why I cannot. The first is that it can be pretty dangerous! The second is that it means a hard session and I'm already following my regular training programme. Normally I manage to get out every Saturday when I have a free weekend from MotoGP. It is not much...but I have a big passion for motocross. I like getting out with the professional riders to learn from them and improve. I want to understand the sport more every time...to get a better feeling on the bike and over the jumps.

Why motocross and not Trial or Enduro or Supermoto...?

I'm not sure. Maybe because I am young and can still do it well! I'm all about 'the track'. I just want to get faster and faster and maybe this is the reason over slower, more technical stuff. I guess the biggest thing is that I started riding motocross as a kid and I have kept that special affection for the sport. I also really like the relaxed world around motocross. Maybe the money and politics - compared to something like road racing - causes this but mainly because it is dirty! It means there is less formality on many levels and I love that.

What is it like near your home? Are there many places to ride? Any sand tracks?

There are sand tracks but you need to have ridden a lot in that terrain to have a good feeling. I actually broke my collarbone riding in sand. There are many tracks quite close to me but the problem is that the mentality is not like it is in America and the preparation of these places is not very good; also because there is not a lot of money or support to be able to do that.

The tracks are not really what I am looking for because I like fast and big jumps and there are not many circuits that are beautiful to me! I went to Sardinia last year to look for better but crashed and had the break on the first day.

Quite a few factory teams use the island for winter training now...

Yes, I was there the week before Tony [Cairolì, four times MX1 World Champion].

Are you a 250 or 450 rider?

I have both but I train with the 250. I do motos like the professionals, so thirty minute sessions, and the 450 is too much for me, I even have problems to push 100% all the way with the 250. The 250 offers the best mix between power and weight for me.

You rode for Honda and Yamaha in the past two years, two different motocrossers as well. A big difference in the 250s?

Not so much but the Yamaha still doesn't have injection and this makes a difference for the power curve of the engine. I'm not such a fan but from the beginning I preferred the Yamaha chassis because it felt more stable on the front entering the corners. I went a little bit faster with the Yamaha and I was lucky to get the race kit from Michele Rinaldi and I'd never had a bike like this, always production, and it felt great. I would love to try the injection because I ride with longer gearing and my rpm is not too high. With the carburettor, when you are low revs, the power is not great. The Rinaldi kit made a difference.

Did you ask Rinaldi to try the fuel injected Yamaha factory prototype YZ250FM?

No...but sometimes it is better not to try a faster bike! It will be a bit safer for me!





“They are very different sports. In motocross you are moving a lot more on the bike. On the streetbike you have a very closed position and you are working specific and small muscle groups....”





A general question but how do you find motocrossers racers compared to road racers?

They come from a different world so it is hard to compare. I love to speak to people like James Dobb to hear their view on things and it was special for me to meet Jean Michel Bayle at Le Mans last season. During the practice and the race he was in my pit box and that was a privilege for me. When everyone says motocross is harder than MotoGP I don't really think that is true. First of all they are very different sports. In motocross you are moving a lot more on the bike and there are more elements to deal with on the track. On the streetbike you have a very closed position on the motorcycle and you are working specific and small muscle groups. If one muscle cramps or goes then there is nothing you can do about it. On a motocross bike you can adapt and move a lot more. You have to use a lot of strength, for sure, but there is more freedom. To summarise they are two totally different activities!

Is motocross getting more popular in Italy?

I think so and since Cairoli became champion I think the sport has become more important, like it used to be in the past when Rinaldi and people like Bartolini were winning. It is good to see but I think motocross still looks bad on the TV. I record all the Grands Prix – because I don't want to miss a race – but when I want to watch with any friends who are fans of motorcycling generally they get bored. For me it is the opposite! But when you do not ride motocross or you don't understand the sport then you cannot watch it in the same way. I prefer to watch motocross racing than streetbikes, although I think you really need to do it to really appreciate it. Everyone can ride or try a streetbike and this is where the ultimate difference comes.

Who would win on the dirt between you and peers like Valentino Rossi and Marco Melandri?

We have already done a few races! I won at a track called Cavallara and also at a place called Franciacorta. Two years ago in Faenza Melandri beat me, and last year he didn't race. Marco and I are very similar on the bike. Any of those who didn't ride motocross as a kid cannot be fast; Valentino is slow! Julian Simon is fast.

Any pressure not to do it?

There was no problem at all with Tech3 but there was a bit more freedom with a satellite team...

What about the AMA...do you follow any...

Of course, of course! Every race!

To watch those like Villopoto and Stewart?

Amazing. But it is a different world. They are riding on different tracks and some of the best circuits in the world. You can do whatever you want on the bike on those tracks. In Europe there are less options, less lines. I love watching how the Americans play with the bikes and this is the beautiful difference compared to the World Championship.

To see someone like Cairoli going full flight or Herlings through the sand...I imagine that you can understand that speed but does it feel like another galaxy?

Yes, 100%, in the same way that what I do must seem to them. It means I am a big fan and I get to every Grand Prix that I can and when our calendars do not clash. I love watching how they ride and race and I know it would be something impossible for me!

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BOWLED OVER BY SX...

By Adam Wheeler



I'm not sure whether it is the effect of social networking and the increasing importance (relevance?) of mobile devices in our lives or that the AMA Supercross championship is reaching a point where it is bigger, better and more vital than before.

Live streams, podcasts, and a thorough wave of build-up from some of the most high profile off-road racing media sources ensured that the opening round of the 2013 series in Los Angeles was an essential date. The real pulse from Anaheim was felt through Twitter where the combination of updates, pics, comments, judgments and reactions from the riders themselves created a whirlwind of coverage; it was a good example of 21st century event reportage and you could feel the buzz wherever you were. Was it at saturation point? Perhaps, but in contrast the 34th Dakar rally started on the same day and in a similar time zone (and with big investments from the likes of KTM, Husqvarna and Honda) but it barely seemed to register.

Part of me thinks that the Americans are extremely lucky. Not only do they have one of the most impactful motorcycle racing series in the world, but now it appears that the Show could really cross seas, oceans, borders and language barriers. I'm not privy to any of the inside word on whether Feld Motorsport run a sustainable and profitable championship but it seems like curiosity in their spectacle is ramping up and reaching new ground; partly thanks to the media surge around it. Can an international scope be added to Supercross for the first time since 2004 and the ill-fated World Series? With its status as an FIM World Championship it cannot be too hard to imagine the contest and its participants considering their freight arrangements. Of course

there has to be a reason for this swell and excitement in Supercross and it must be more than the simple fact that the racing season has come alive again. If you know anything about SX then you will recognise that the level of the competition again seems to be hitting peaks with a depth of talent that verges on the ridiculous. Supercross has gained urgency since the start of the decade because it continues to move very quickly through cycles of unpredictability. The sport is perilous, as the raft of high level injuries have shown in previous seasons and Anaheim '1' does carry a hint of 'illusion' with the start gates bursting and the freshness of it all.

Never before has AMA SX been so compelling. Can it go international...??

The worst that could happen is a rider mounts a streak of victories to apply a bit of a 'bit here, seen it' feeling, but this is an inevitable part of any motorsport. Supercross has evolved beyond the point where one or two riders were head-and-shoulders ahead of the rest and 2011's four way dice for the title was a fine example of why the sport very soon has to be considered big league in an international sense.

The hype around last weekend's Anaheim spectacle – with the results proving that the first weekend of January is truly one of the unmissable racing fixtures – coupled with the chance to see the likes of Barcia to Villopoto to Brayton going for podium slots means that Supercross deserves the hysteria. Never before has it been so compelling to try and find a way to tune in.



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SELLING MotoGP

**DORNA MANAGING DIRECTOR PAU SERRACANTA SPEAKS EXCLUSIVELY
TO OTOR AND SHEDS SOME LIGHT ON HOW MOTOGP MOVES AND SHAKES**

By Adam Wheeler, Photos by Dorna Sports, www.yamahamotogp.com

With title sponsors in each of the eighteen rounds and five continents covered in 2013 MotoGP presents a respectable commercial face. Responsibility for this lies mostly at the feet of the legally trained former rally co-driver who has been organising the business facet of the sport for over ten years since

moving from his role on the International Paralympic Committee. The Catalan joined Dorna in 1999 and here talks about the transition from the tobacco era, the changing MotoGP landscape and the imminent impact of World Superbike coming under the same office roof in Barcelona...

Pau, what's your place in Dorna?

I came into Dorna to be Sales Manager then became Commercial Director and now to Commercial MD, which means my role involves management and production of the commercial area - essentially what we are selling and what we are building. We are selling sponsorship and we are building platforms; we are selling the VIP Village and we are building the corporate hospitality possibilities and facilities. This is always in line with the other departments in Dorna. In a way we are like the last link in the chain. First you need the events and secondly you need the sport out there on TV and have the audiences through the screens and at the track. This has a commercial value that allows us to then go to the market and see if there is anyone interested in being associated with the sport.

I guess your business life involves an endless series of meetings. MotoGP must register with some potential clients but then be a mystery to others. Is this where the challenge lies?

Yeah, we have all kinds of approaches. Sometimes we have contact with those who are familiar or even fans of MotoGP and the first thing that we say is that we are both almost part of the same family because we have that passion for the sport! If there's the chance to sit down with someone who is completely new to MotoGP then this is a challenge for sure but at the same time we are in our comfort zone because we know our sport very well and we can effectively transmit our feelings for it. Most of the team here have been working around MotoGP for many years and they have that experience. Getting new partners is not difficult but it is challenging. I mean at the end of the day it is a business meeting and we are in competition with other sport entertainment and you have to clearly identify which values that MotoGP can bring compared to others.

How have you found selling MotoGP in the last few years? From the outside MotoGP still has big firms and brands like Hertz, Air Asia and Iveco at sponsorship level...

When I joined Dorna in 1999 the first thing we did was make an analysis of how to market MotoGP. It is a global sport so our market was wide. We looked at who we could target with the package that we have, so that's sponsorship, corporate hospitality and licencing. It meant almost all the companies! We were in Barcelona and were like 'woah! Where do we start?!'. When you are not selling then you think every minute is wasted. It can be stressful and the first thing you have to learn is to be calm! We went step-by-step and made a clear path of how to go to market, narrowing the market and identify where opportunities could be. We know our strengths and we are always fully aware of what is going on in the world of business. Our team has to be well versed with the business press every day to see between the lines where some opportunities might lie. Everyone always says to me "you have to go to Coca-Cola" but they are sponsoring other sports so it is not always clear. We are used to looking where we can offer business to business and business to consumer chances, what companies are rebranding and who is pushing. We then go directly or indirectly through agents to see how we can arrive to the gatekeeper of the budgets in these companies and try to set up meetings. With the current complicated economical situation, I am happy with how we have continued to grow with MotoGP; we have attracted new and good companies to the sport.

We work hard but it is not like we are smarter than other guys selling sport entertainment. I have always said that we were lucky to have had tobacco money in the past. When I first came to Dorna Carmelo [Ezpeleta, CEO] said to me "Pau, what will you do when the cigarette money runs out in 2006?"



I said: "I don't know! But we have six years to find a solution". What we started to do at that time was begin to open our minds and work out how we can approach companies from other sectors and be more creative and productive with the packages we had to offer, like B2B values, special experiences etc etc. From 2002 and 2003 we were pushing hard to get new companies into MotoGP so that when it came to 2007 we were already fixed, and going into a non-tobacco environment was not so traumatic for us. The crisis then started in 2008! That's when everyone in sports entertainment went 'wow!' I was selling every year with a 10-15% increase because all was fantastic and then it went to crazy numbers like -30/40% with big discounts. This wasn't really our case because we set ourselves up with long term agreements in the tobacco years in different sectors and it meant we could go to market without a great deal of stress and that small cushion helps us to do our jobs more effectively. We were fortunate to have that tobacco run up until '06 and we spread our wings. Now

we have firms like insurance, travel, air travel, energy drinks which are steady and global and even if it is tough for them in some markets they can grow in others and we can get a good balance with them.

Do you think the level of tobacco money will ever come back to MotoGP?

No. That has disappeared. In the final years the tobacco brands had some difficulty in their promotion because of the regulations but that is not the case for any companies in MotoGP now and that exposure in other channels is good for the sport. Maybe MotoGP has less money but if that is compensated with better visibility among the audiences then this is also helpful. With lower funds in MotoGP what we – as Dorna - have done is try to reduce the cost of racing and I think you have seen those measures through Moto2, Moto3 and MotoGP. It is basic numbers.





You mentioned being the last link in the chain but you must also be saying to Carmelo and the rest of Dorna ‘please make a Grand Prix in a growing territory’. We read every day that Europe is in the doldrums so I guess you and your team have to be aware of markets all around the world...?

We are watching the market a lot and also listening to our clients. We try to gauge strategically what areas in the world we might be able to grow. Southeast Asia is very important and we have a Grand Prix there in Malaysia. We are able to use that event as a hub to draw people from Indonesia, the Philippines and generally companies and people from that region. We already have had a good experience with Air Asia, which is a fast growing firm in that area of the world, and Maybank got involved in 2012. Somewhere like Brazil was booming a lot in Latin America but is declining a little. We were looking there with interest. Normally there are discussions in Dorna where an opportunity could arise.

I am a title sponsor and I’m interested in speaking with you about a Grand Prix. Is the process complicated or actually quite easy to arrange?

From Dorna’s side what we try to do is not just attract new companies but also retain them and the level of loyalty we have is very high compared to other sports. There is not much analysis of the return on the investment but the best barometer is the amount of renewals and we have a lot. Those like Tissot since '92, Philip Morris since '92, BMW since 1999, Campari group since 2000. To answer your question directly first we will sit with you to deduce exactly what you are looking for and normally that means good brand exposure.

We provide the support to ensure maximum visibility with the corporate guidelines; items

like the podium, grid girls, track bridges, corners and something we introduced in 2012, which was the LED ad boards. Once we have defined the exposure then there are other areas like PR events and customisable hospitality – that we produce for you - and all the logistics. Also grid presence and commercial presence at the track. If you want to sell at the GP then we give our advice gained from experience. Lastly if there is any special needs like VIPs then this is also taken care of. Our goal is to provide a low stress environment by getting as many elements of the agreement as ready as possible.

There must be different rates depending on the prestige of the Grand Prix...

Yes, there are varying prices taking into account the audiences both at the track and at home also the tradition of the GP, somewhere like Assen for example. Companies normally focus on an event and territory that has particular relevance for them but sometimes because of the appeal of a certain Grand Prix.

How is important is the marketing data? Do companies really place a lot of stock in the average age and demographics of the audiences?

It is basic. If you want to commercialise your sport you need to explain who you are and what are your values. Companies are normally looking to associate with brand values so in our case it is: innovation, technology, speed, and youthfulness so the firms hoping to fit in with those are the first we approach. After the initial link then the accumulative audience comes into it; TV, track, new media and the people who are watching. All commercialised sports need this data.



In your experience have there been any companies coming into MotoGP that you initially thought were not an obvious fit?

To have a 100% fit with the values that any sport offers is quite difficult. But there are always good affinities. We do not have anyone who is forced to be here and that means their business is benefitting from being associated with MotoGP. Take BMW. We did a study and BMW has more motorsport values compared to some other car brands. When people realise that BMW is involved as the official safety car supplier then the core values they have are enhanced, also with the special sales product they have with the paddock community they are also selling a lot of cars within MotoGP so there is good business behind their deal. Are BMW looking for brand recognition? Not so much. I think a very high amount of the world's population knows that BMW is a German car brand but they have business interests, they can entertain guests and they can boost values through their MotoGP deal. A

company like Hertz have decided to rejuvenate their brand and there is a lot of B2B involved there. We rent through them and the circuits can also use vehicles that are not just cars for the event set-up. It is an interesting approach and they can differentiate from their competitors because there is no other car rental brand involved in MotoGP.

If we look inside the paddock do you think teams are doing well with their own marketing efforts and strategies?

When we are out there in the market we are trying to convince companies to get involved in motorcycling, not just MotoGP as a series and with the series organiser. We want them involved in bikes and not in swimming, athletics or football. When we discuss with a brand then we put options on the table that represent the best solution for them. We have our inventory which we propose but some want a more emotional link with the sport and prefer a team or to take a rider as ambassador.



We have many clients who came to the sport of two wheeled racing through us and who have been involved with teams also. So we have this direct dialogue with the teams and they know that when we go to the client we won't just be pushing our own packages but to see if that company will feel good somewhere in our paddock. Sometimes we have agreements where from our side we have taken a small part of the budget available for corporate hospitality and the brand visibility goes directly to the team and they then have a significant sponsor. We are happy with this because it means the money stays in the sport and doesn't go anywhere else. We share all our marketing data with the teams and if they need dedicated info to approach sponsors then we can provide this. The problem is that we are more stable as a business and going to market. In theory it is 'easier' for us because I know – through contracts - where the Grands Prix will be held and the dates, so what I am selling is more static and can be done long-

term. It means I am in a better position to get through the crisis. For teams their approach is more short-term and can hinge on the nationality of their chosen rider. It is harder for them. The dream scenario is a title sponsor that does not care where their rider is from because they can plan long-term.

So you have some sympathy...

Of course, and like I said we always try to bring some business their way. The teams have a good asset to sell but what we recommend is that if they gain a sponsor for two-three years then they try to tie their rider to a similar mid-term agreement. Trying to get a pool of sponsors that is based on association with the team and then some through the link with the rider is key and then balancing that when some drop out and others come in. Most teams are already doing this. Some teams are doing their jobs very well. Someone like Gresini was able to announce a new three year deal once their deal with San Carlo had finished.



Do you sometimes wish the sporting side of MotoGP would settle down? Do things like rules changes, CRT, depleted grids and so on make your job of selling the sport harder?

Honestly, no. Firstly what we are selling in MotoGP is the history. This series is strong because of all the years and championships behind it and since 1949 the best riders and manufacturers have been competing here. It is a huge asset. I admit there are some cycles involved. Some years might see more or less manufacturers or there is less or more distance between the leaders and the rest of the field but we strive to present this overall vision of the sport. In times when there were only sixteen bikes on the grid then the TV audiences have still been good. Obviously, long-term, if it looks like the grid is shrinking then some action needs to be taken and this was the case with CRT. CRT did not present a problem, in fact it was an opportunity because we had more bikes and interest in a different 'class' and this happens in other motorsports. When I watch Formula One I know who are the three front-runners but at the back is another league; who will be the best of that group? Some can see it in a negative way but I think those people do not understand motorsport.

How will your job change with World Superbike coming into the equation?

After all the discussions we believe that having one company running the two major series in two wheeled racing means creation of high level synergies – also with the Spanish CEV included – and makes us stronger ahead of other sports. Clearly now we have a vision of what is going on with each series. I know 80% of the riders competing in the premier championship that is MotoGP – because of the history – have come through the classes and on prototype bikes. But there is 20% from other

series' like Supersport and Superbike, those like Crutchlow, Spies, Hayden. It is a fantastic mix and the possibility for people like Crutchlow – who is a strong character and important for a single market, the UK – is very good. If he goes back to Superbike after a few years it will be positive for that championship because he will have come from MotoGP, like Checa and Biaggi. I'm extremely happy with the situation and there will be no confusion in terms of the presentation; one series is production and the other is prototype. One small change is the 'lights' in WSB. If you see a photo then this will offer an immediate distinction. If you are a fan you will already know if you are looking at a Superbike or MotoGP machine but for the new fans it will be easier to identify. This kind of thing is happening in other sports. Take soccer. How many matches are played every week? Yet watch a UEFA Champions League fixture and you know right away that it is a European game thanks to the 'stars' branding around the stadium and also on the shirts. Both MotoGP and WSB will have their own value.

What about the business side? Can a company like Hertz be pulled across both series?

Firms will target what they want. Some will want the soccer Champions League and others the Europa league; it is like this. It is about identifying the opportunity and where it fits with each championship. If a comparison has to be made then people like to place MotoGP in the same realm as Formula one for bikes. We don't want to be there or be seen to be copying...because it would be a bad copy! You have to keep your authenticity, and World Superbikes has its own personality with the open paddocks and the two races and it should remain like this and it will appeal to different people.



Has it become interesting for you in the last few years with the development of social media and the fact that you can reach perhaps more audience through an app or mobile device than perhaps at the track? You've had to evolve to embrace this...?

Yes, it is very important for us because the fans of MotoGP are normally quick to try new things and think a little bit 'out of the box'. A person who decides to go on two wheels rather than four is already a bit different and we like to think our audience is more proactive. With New Media we have analysed the streams and we have more Facebook followers than NASCAR and Formula One and also a big Twitter catchment; this supports what we

believe about MotoGP fans receptiveness to new technologies. We can entertain 2.4 million who are coming to the events and almost 4million on Facebook so the interaction possibilities are fantastic and something else we can offer to the companies. It is another smart channel where we can say 'we are here, check out some cool stuff'. With social networks you need to treat it in a correct and clever way and you don't have to push and push. Let the community work by itself and just drop the material and 'food for thought'. By nature it means a positive approach by the community that the message spreads. I'm happy with that big awareness and it is an advantage for us over other sports.

READY TO RACE
» www.ktm.com

Photos: Tagliari S., Archer R.

**CAIROLI UND
HERLINGS
WELTMEISTER!**

DÉJÀ-VU

Tony Cairoli krönt sich 2012 vorzeitig und zum dritten Mal in Folge mit der KTM 350 SX-F zum MX1 Weltmeister. Nach Marvin Musquin 2010 und Ken Roczen 2011, sorgt Jeffrey Herlings mit der KTM 250 SX-F dafür, dass das Red Bull KTM Werksteam seit nunmehr drei Jahren in beiden Klassen ungeschlagen ist – WELTKLASSE!

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DAY-DREAMING...

By Gavin Emmett

As the MotoGP riders continue their hibernation until the pre-season testing ban is lifted at the end of this month, the start of the new year is a perfect time to look forward to what 2013 has in store for the sport, with a number of high-profile changes piquing everybody's interest for the campaign ahead.

With Casey Stoner sadly no longer in the picture, all eyes will be on the next young gun to make waves, and excitement abounds over the arrival of Marc Márquez. Not many pundits are in doubt about the Spaniard's talent after he won world titles in 125cc and Moto2. Although over-exuberant and aggressive on occasion, he is certain to be fighting for podiums and most probably wins throughout the year. Recall World Champion Jorge Lorenzo's own graduation in 2008, with its successes marred by the odd crash, and I don't think we'll be too wide of the mark.

While Márquez takes his first steps among the big hitters, one of the biggest will face perhaps his most important year to date. Valentino Rossi's return to Yamaha after two barren years at Ducati will be the focus of many fans attention as the riders begin testing at the start of February. There are more questions than answers at the moment, and for so many reasons it would be great if he could rekindle some of his past successes. If for nothing else MotoGP at least needs somebody to be able to challenge the might of the Spanish triumvirate of Lorenzo, Pedrosa and Márquez.

Of course, with Rossi out of the picture at Ducati, the buck has passed to Andrea Dovizioso to lead the Italian marque's charge on Spanish dominance, and we should begin to get an idea of how the Audi takeover is going to influence the brand's future. It would appear on the surface to be a long-shot to expect podiums in the early stages of the season for Dovizioso or Hayden, or even Ben Spies, but radical steps forward are needed quickly.

As for British interest, Cal Crutchlow will hope to kick-on even further after an impressive 2012; if he can cut out some of the mistakes he made at key points, he could well find himself in amongst the factory boys, although that would be too much to expect of his new team-mate Bradley Smith. The rookie has been tireless in his preparation for 2013, even taking part in a national race in Qatar to sample the track on a 1000cc machine.

Despite talk of the rest, Jorge Lorenzo will go into the season as favourite, with Dani Pedrosa hot on his heels after a thoroughly impressive second-half of last year. Throw Márquez into the mix and it's looking good for Spain, and also for some fierce and thrilling racing, but if Rossi can rediscover the form that took him to seven premier class titles, Italy and much of the MotoGP world will breathe a huge sigh of relief.





CLASS

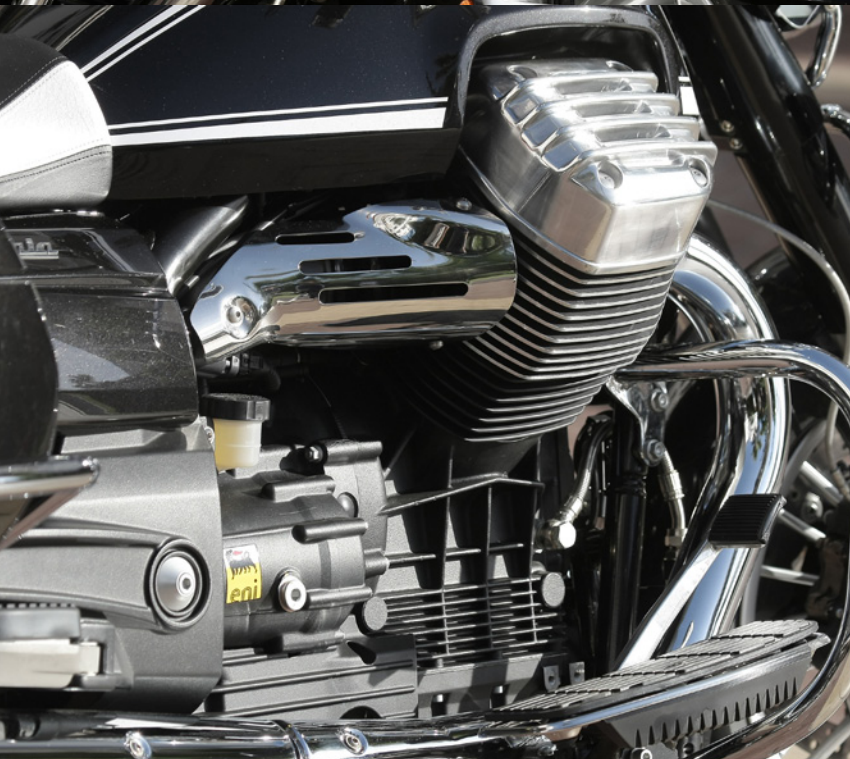
MOTO GUZZI'S CALIFORNIA TAKES YOU TO THAT SPECIAL PLACE ON TWO WHEELS


By Roland Brown, photos by Milagro

Moto Guzzi's California has been one of the world's most recognisable motorbikes for decades. Long, low and laid back, generally with wide bars and a big seat, and always with the air-cooled cylinders of its transverse V-twin engine sticking out below the petrol tank, the California has been Guzzi's signature model ever since the first one left the firm's lakeside factory in northern Italy in 1970.

But there has never been a bike like the California Touring. This latest in the line is the first of a new generation (it will be followed by a naked California Special model in a few months). It's the most significant California yet, and a bike that Guzzi says represents a turning point in the marque's history, which dates back more than 90 years.







Guzzi's design team has done a fine job of bringing the California image up to date. The look combines traditional shapes with modern elements such as the uniquely shaped headlight. The Cali felt special as I threw a leg over the low, black-and-white seat, and examined the large and equally stylish chrome-rimmed instrument console.

Sculpted, polished aluminium cylinder heads jut out below the embossed eagle crests on the shapely fuel tank. Paintwork, in black or the alternative white, is lustrous. Stylish detailing is everywhere, from the many logos to the finely spoked cast wheels.

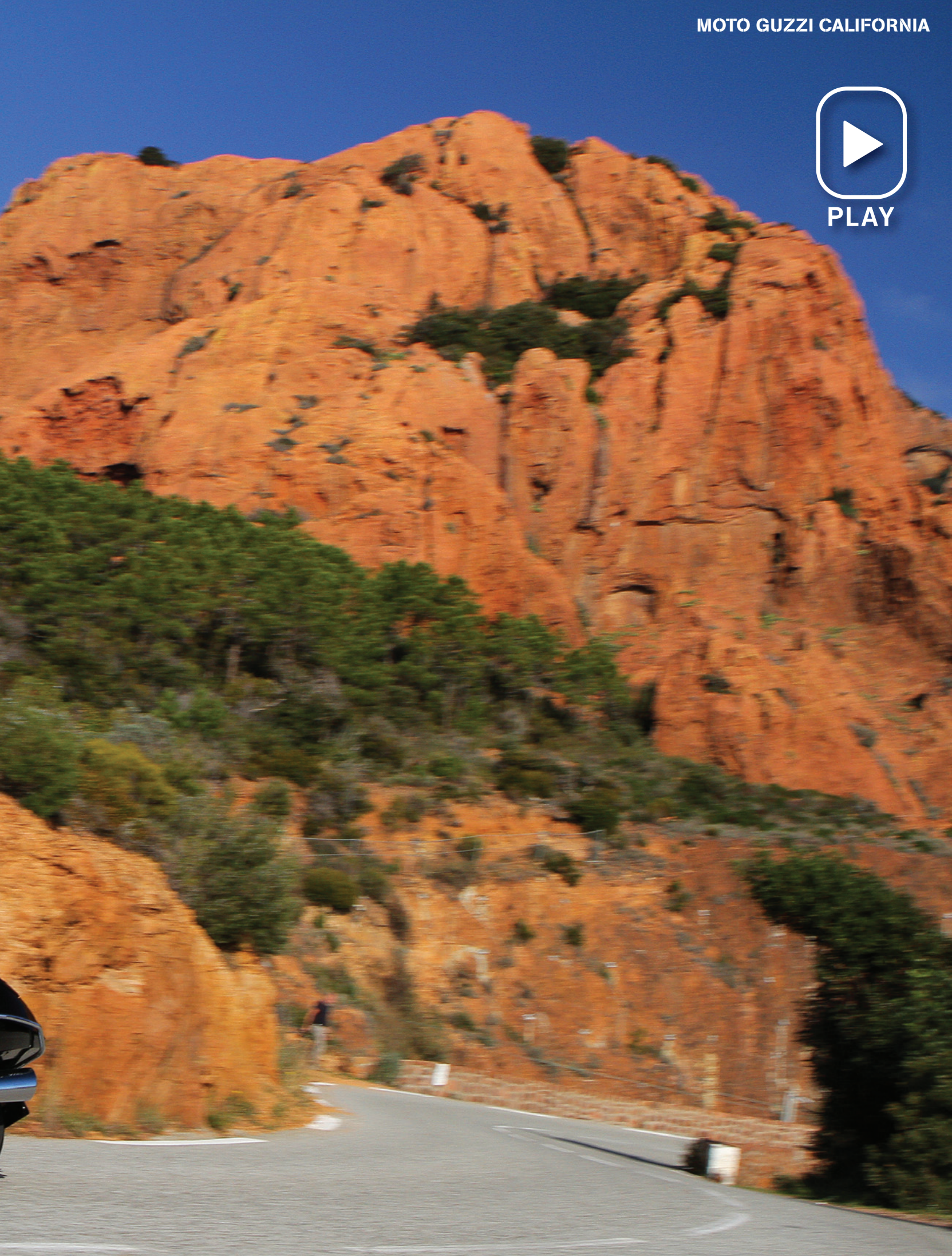
With a capacity of 1380cc, the air-cooled, 90-degree engine is the biggest that Guzzi has ever produced. It's built for flexibility not top-end power. With a maximum output of 96bhp it's 6bhp less powerful than Guzzi's existing 1151cc engine. But it produces 15% more torque and grunts out its maximum at just 2750rpm.

This California is a much more sophisticated machine than its predecessors. It incorporates ride-by-wire throttle control, cruise control and traction control. The rider can choose from three engine modes, patriotically named Veloce, Turismo and Pioggia instead of Fast, Touring and Rain.

California

“Californias have always handled well over the years, and this one didn’t let the family down. On twistier roads it was easy to flick around for such a big, heavy machine. ...”



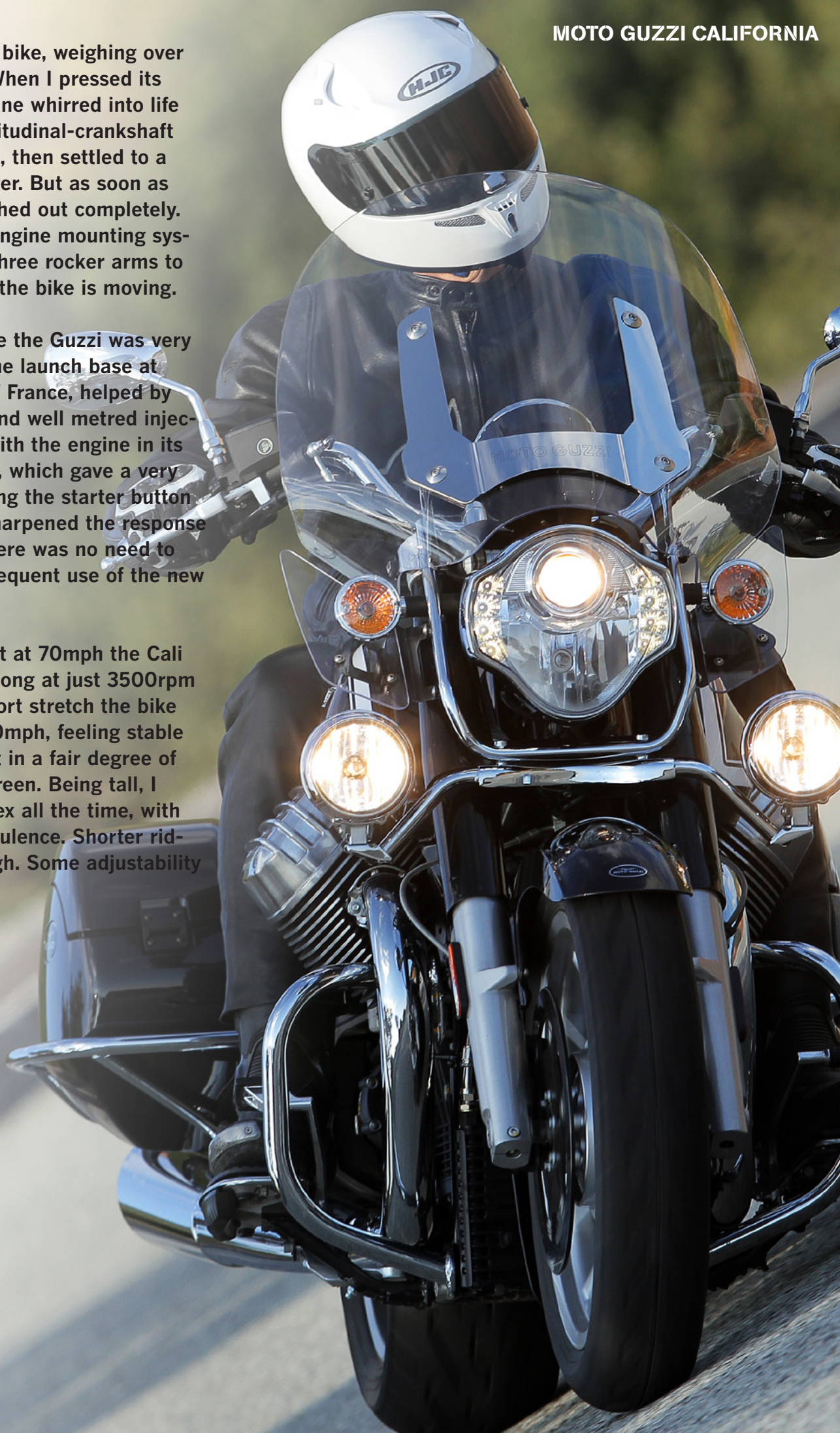




The California is a big bike, weighing over 320kg ready to ride. When I pressed its starter button the engine whirred into life with a trademark longitudinal-crankshaft lurch from side to side, then settled to a lumpy 1400rpm tickover. But as soon as I pulled away it smoothed out completely. Guzzi's efficient new engine mounting system uses rubber and three rocker arms to reduce vibration once the bike is moving.

For such a big machine the Guzzi was very easy to ride as I left the launch base at Cannes in the south of France, helped by its plush suspension and well metred injection system. I began with the engine in its middle, Turismo mode, which gave a very gentle delivery. Pressing the starter button to change to Veloce sharpened the response slightly. Either way, there was no need to rev it hard, or make frequent use of the new six-speed gearbox.

Tall gearing meant that at 70mph the Cali was throbbing lazily along at just 3500rpm in top gear. On one short stretch the bike whirred up to over 100mph, feeling stable and relaxed while I sat in a fair degree of comfort behind the screen. Being tall, I looked over the perspex all the time, with little trouble from turbulence. Shorter riders had to look, through. Some adjustability would be useful.



TEST

Californias have always handled well over the years, and this one didn't let the family down. On twistier roads near Fréjus it was easy to flick around for such a big, heavy machine. But it couldn't lean very far before running out of ground clearance, well before the Dunlop tyres reached their limits of grip. That was slightly disappointing, but I doubt whether most owners will complain.

They'll certainly be satisfied with the brake system. The Cali's superbike style front set-up of 320mm Brembo discs with four-piston

radial calipers gave very powerful stopping, backed up by efficient ABS. Surprisingly the bike doesn't have a system linking front and rear discs, as pioneered by Guzzi in the '70s.

The California should be a reasonably practical tourer. Guzzi say this motor is between 15 and 20 per cent more fuel efficient than their old V-twin. The comprehensive digital display showed the bike averaging 40mpg, giving a respectable range of about 150 miles. The broad seat seemed comfortable; a pillion gets a traditional chromed rail to hold.





Engine heat might be an issue on a hot day, as the sticking-out cylinders sit near the rider's shins, but on a mild afternoon I had no problem, despite being tall. The panniers opened easily and held a reasonable amount, though owners wanting to store a helmet will need to add a top-box from an accessory list that also includes alternative handlebars and seats, plus many chromed details.

That long list of accessories is another indication of how much effort Guzzi have put into this bike. They've done a fine job, too. The California is a significant model whose blend of style, performance and sophistication puts the famous old Italian firm, now owned by scooter giant Piaggio, on course for an exciting future.

PRODUCTS

ALPINESTARS

A quick slice of diverse Alpinestars products and yet further items from their '13 catalogue.

The **Winter Tech Performance** wear will sort you out under riding gear for the next couple of months and until the temperatures start to pick up. The garments are nearly seamless and have double density fabric in key areas. Naturally the material wicks away moisture, so you don't feel so sweaty, and the fit also offers compression, scientifically proven to help with muscle fatigue.

Warm, waterproof yet breathable the **Tech Road Gore-Tex Gloves** also have the build and protective elements you'd expect from Alpinestars and a price tag of 150 euros. Knuckle protection and finger bridges and injection moulded poly-foam reinforcements in the palm are some of the details, including a handy (excuse the pun) helmet visor wipe 'strip' in the thumb.

Lastly the **Classic Shoe** (read 'comfy trainers') is something you'll like to see in race paddocks around the world once the new seasons begin.



Check out a cool video by www.motogp.com to see how Alpinestars make their leather suits





PRODUCTS



KTM

KTM's Powerwear collection is a treasure-trove of accessories, from decorative to practical, encompassing riding safety items to salt and pepper pots.

One of the strongest elements of the 2013 range – something that has been in place for a couple of years now – is KTM's wisdom in allying themselves with market leaders and other forceful companies in their respective fields. So the KTM neck brace is essential Leatt technology, riding garments, boots and gloves come livered from Alpinestars and lids are provided by Arai.

The gear is not overtly KTM - so some of it could appeal to any motorcycle fan – but for the orange petrolhead it is impossible not to find something of use or novelty. Here are some highlights from the Street line but we'll be dipping into the brochure to see what else there is over coming issues.





SHOEI

In a recent edition of OTOR we flagged Shoei's new GT Air as one of the main 'lookouts' from their 2013 offering.

The **X-Spirit II** is the flagship lid seen on MotoGP racers such as double world champion Marc Marquez and the MotoGP rookie has a replica version of the helmet (with the craggy red and black design) set for the market.

A slightly cheaper model with four less vents, a different shape (for better all round performance on the road) and without the Emergency Quick Release System is the **XR-1100**. For British MotoGP fans the fetching Bradley Smith scheme stands out here. The XR also comes in Marquez colours.







SEVEN

James Stewart's new association with Troy Lee Designs was announced shortly before Anaheim 1.

The Suzuki man's attempt to set up a new brand that is not based stringently around his name means that the project already has extra potential, especially in light of the baffling polemic profile the former champion has endured in recent years. With the JS7 logo not forming a heavy part of the gear and Troy Lee's renowned touch when it comes to design and colours there is a lot to be curious about and how Seven will be received by the wider market.

Will the material carry the quality needed for the hardcore and will the casualwear help the company to catch on? We'll have to wait until after the summer to appreciate the full range. In the meantime check out these images and the launch video with the two protagonists explaining the concept.





BACKPAGE

2013 AMA SX Monster Energy girls
By Simon Cudby







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'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every other Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

Adam Wheeler Editor and FIM MXGP correspondent

Ray Archer Photographer

Steve Matthes AMA MX and SX correspondent

Simon Cudby Photographer

Steve Cox Photo-journalist

Matthew Roberts Television Presenter and MotoGP correspondent

Gavin Emmett TV commentator/Presenter and MotoGP correspondent

Núria Garcia & Tactilestudio Design

Gabi Álvarez Web developer

PHOTO CREDITS

Ray Archer, Monster Energy, Milagro, Simon Cudby, motogp.com, Milagro, Stefano Taglioni, Claudio Cabrini

Cover shot: Eli Tomac by Simon Cudby

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